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Children's Division Maintaining Medical Records Report

Report for January 1, 2023 – June 30, 2023

Introduction

The Department of Social Services (the Department) oversees several programs to support the general welfare of children in the State of Missouri. The Department has established the Children's Division to administer and manage the programs for children who are in the legal custody of the state. The Children's Division promotes the well-being of Missouri children by partnering with parents, family/community members and government agencies. The Children's Division has developed specific programs to provide specialized services. These programs help strengthen families through intervention, prevention, early childcare, adoption, and foster care.

Each Children's Division program is unique; however, the emphasis of this report is on the children in the "Missouri Foster Care Program." This refers to children placed away from their parents or placed in Children's Division custody for 24-hour care. A foster care program includes placements in: foster family homes, foster homes of relatives, group homes, emergency shelters, residential facilities, child care institutions, and pre-adoptive homes. When children are suddenly separated from their parents or other caregivers for entrance into the foster care system, it can be a difficult and traumatic time for families. When the child is in Children's Division custody, it is in the best interests of the child for parents, resource providers, and case managers to know that child's medical history and current information and share that medical history with those individuals who are providing care. An efficient medical records system can provide the medical information needed to support proper care.

The term medical record is used to describe the systematic documentation of a child's medical history and plan of care. The medical record includes a variety of "notes" entered by health care providers. These notes include, but are not limited to: orders for the administration of drugs and therapies, laboratory test results, treatment/service plans, and observations of the child's symptoms and/or responses to treatment. The information contained in the medical record allows health care providers to assess the child's current treatments and review previous medical history. This can increase the providers' ability to prescribe safe and effective remedies. The medical record serves as the central source for planning the child's care and documenting the provision of medical services.

A medical records system may be paper or electronic. A paper medical records system consists of physical documents that are placed in a file or folder. An electronic medical records system consists of medical information entered into a computer or other digital device.

This report documents the commitment of the Children's Division to the development and operation of a statewide system to maintain medical records and/or medical information for each child in its custody. The medical records system must operate and maintain all medical records consistent with federal and state law and Children's Division policy.

To ensure the confidentiality, maintenance of, and access to a child's medical records are consistent with applicable provisions of federal and state law, Children's Division is compliant with the Department's information security system. The information security process was implemented to be in compliance with the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act and the State of Missouri's Sunshine Law requirements.

The Children's Division has placed great importance on the oversight and coordination of medical/behavioral health services provided to children in its custody. Developing, operating, and maintaining a medical records system is a vital and essential service for each child. The medical records system can provide prescribers, the child, parent(s), placement providers, and case managers with enough current and historical information to promote the effective and efficient delivery of various medical/behavioral health treatments. This report contains the Children's Division's current efforts to maintain medical records and their plans to implement a medical records system.

Current Efforts for Maintaining Medical Records

The Children's Division continues to operate and maintain the OnBase document imaging system as the primary method for storing and retrieving various medical documents. The OnBase system provides a centralized source for Children's Division staff to locate a variety of documents that refer to services provided to the child/youth. Also, documents with medical information may be kept in the case manager's physical case file. In order to ensure that potentially relevant documents are maintained, all Children's Division and Foster Care Case Management staff, and Residential Contractors are directed to maintain in the physical case file any medical documents received that relate to the treatment of a child/youth in foster care who has a prescription for psychotropic medications. These documents must be kept, even if the information is entered into an electronic system. The procedure for storing medical documents in the physical case file is in accordance with the Council on Accreditation standards of practice.

The collection of medical documents and information remain a top priority for Children's Division. The Health Information Specialist (HIS) staff continue their efforts to compile a full and accurate medical record for children/youth in foster care. In addition to the record collection work completed by the HIS staff, the Show Me Healthy Kids (SMHK) specialty plan staff can now assist in the collection of medical documents. The SMHK staff will search for and collect past medical documents and information for children/youth who are specialty plan members and have entered foster care. SMHK staff will upload the medical documents to SMHK's Health Passport portal. The expectation is that Children's Division staff will continue to request current medical documents while the child/youth is in foster care.

The addition of the SMHK staff as a resource to collect medical documents is a major step in the pursuit of a comprehensive medical record. The HIS staff and Children's Division case managers continue to utilize the following methods to acquire medical documents:

- Biscom fax, sends and receives requests for medical documents from various entities;
- CIOX, complete document requests from health care agencies that are enrolled with CIOX Health;
- hXe (health eXchange evolved), medical document request directly to any healthcare provider; and
- ShowMeVax, tracking an individual's immunization history and status.

Other sources for obtaining medical information are Health Information Networks (HIN). One of the HINs is the Show-Me Health Information Network of Missouri (SHINE). Children's Division staff, in partnership with MO HealthNet Division, have been testing the SHINE portal to determine if the system can provide the medical information needed to review the prescription and administration of psychotropic medications for children/youth in foster care. SHINE is a physician-led HIN delivered in partnership with the Missouri State Medical Association that offers a set of health information technology tools to help health professionals across the State of Missouri with continuity of care.

The Children's Division has been working with the Enterprise Project Management Office of the State of Missouri's Office of Administration to continue mapping out the current business processes for each section in the Family and Children Electronic System, known as FACES. A private agency has been contracted to serve as project manager for the planning and implementation of a new Comprehensive Child Welfare Information (CCWIS) system for Children's Division, being designed to replace FACES. The objective of the CCWIS project is to discuss the structure of a child welfare system that integrates new technology into a system that can centralize data from various sources and produce information at the time the service was provided. The private agency staff are conducting specific web-based sessions to review current tasks and processes in the FACES system related to foster care, psychotropic medication, and medical records. The information gathered will be utilized to create a CCWIS design with the plan to enhance the tasks and processes performed in FACES.

Plans to Develop a Medical Records System

The search for, as well as the acceptance and implementation of, a medical records system that meets Missouri's statutory and Joint Settlement Agreement requirements have been ongoing. Children's Division has reviewed and tested several medical records systems with varying results. Pilot projects such as the Missouri Medical Passport Programs, Patient Centric Medical Solution (PCMS) system and the Oracle/Cerner project with the HealtheIntent platform have been piloted and tested. The results were reviewed and the projects were not implemented statewide because cost-effectiveness and feasibility could not be established.

Children's Division has implemented several methods to obtain medical documents. These efforts have been important for the review and provision of services provided to children/youth. The complete impact of the SMHK staff's collection assistance and the SHINE review are not known at this time; however, Children's Division will continue to assess the efficacy of these efforts throughout the next reporting period.

A review of the CCWIS has just begun and the project is in the information gathering phase. The CCWIS is a Federal government initiative which contains several Federal requirements that must be met to acquire funding. The fundamental functions of a CCWIS authorized case management and data-collection system are to provide state agencies with current information through the use of new technology. The agencies can use this information to guide services delivered to children/youth and their families, while meeting the Federal government's reporting requirements.

Children's Division continues to search for a system that will meet the stringent requirements necessary to store and protect the medical documents and information of children/youth in foster care.